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## SOCIAL LIFE IN FRANCE.

### A COUNTRY TOWN—A BATHING-PLACE.

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE SOLMANIE, one of the many who lost all by the first Revolution, came to live with us when I was four years old, under the pretence of being governess to me; the only mode my parents could devise, without hurting her feelings of sensitive delicacy, to induce the kind-hearted being, from whom, in happier days, they had received much attention, to take up her abode in their house. She spoke her own language with purity and elegance, and every motion was grace; but more than this she could teach nothing, except perhaps embroidery, inasmuch as, beyond reading and writing moderately, and spelling very incorrectly, she had been taught nothing herself. She and her daughter Caroline, however, remained as part of the family until the Restoration, six years afterwards, enabled her to return to France, and die where she first drew breath. We two children, much about the same age, loved each other like sisters, and parted in despair; and Caroline's first action, after her marriage to a young employé of noble family who had obtained a very good place in a town I shall call Tourloville, was to beg and implore of me to come and stay with her. This at the time I could not do; but a few years afterwards, Colonel and Mrs Mellerton, who were travelling by a circuitous road to Paris, dropped me *en route*, and we had the happiness of meeting once more.

Madame de Vorinfort was a thorough Frenchwoman, while upon me, ignorant of everything French but the language, the impression made by customs and manners so unusual was so great, that I think I can call to mind even the slightest circumstances distinctly. The house in which the De Vorinforts lived was at the lower and more fashionable end of the principal street, which was narrow, paved with painted pebbles, and *sans trottoir* of course—Paris itself in those days (though not very distant) being equally ill off in this respect. Lamps 'few and far between' were swung across on ropes; and the gutter was in the middle, where the inhabitants every night deposited in heaps all things that the want of proper drainage prevented from being carried off in a manner less conspicuous and more agreeable to the senses. After eleven in the day, however, nothing of this last nuisance was very perceptible; and the picturesque forms of the irregular old houses much delighted me, as did also the quaint, old-fashioned appearance of everything around. M. de Vorinfort's house, *entre cour et jardin*, made rather an imposing appearance from the street, owing to the length of the front; in depth, however, it was so deficient, that a corridor and a room, neither of them very wide, were all it could contain. The numerous windows, with their espagnolettes of clumsy woodwork, the ill-seasoned, shrinking,

skirting-boards, and the ill-fitting doors, made it very cold in winter; for the elegant folds and festoons of the side draperies were more thought of than the comfort of ample curtains of more homely stuff; and as for carpets, there were none. In my progress down the *grande rue*, followed by two porters with my luggage, I met a diligence; and while I was staring at the enormous wagon-like vehicle, covered with the dirt that had adhered to it from the day it was first used, drawn by strong, shaggy, ill-groomed horses, three and two abreast, piled up to the clouds, and thatched (a sight never to be seen now), a gentleman's carriage, with an earl's coronet and a common rope harness, passed. The loud smacking of the whips, the shouts of the respective postilions, in jack-boots and queues, so confounded my weak mind, that I did not observe a donkey with huge panniers on either side, upon which sat a lady with her feet in one of them, who, bowing politely, apologised for pinning me up tight against the wall, while some rude children called out 'Ah ha, Madame G——D——n! c'est une Anglaise, bien sur—regardez son chapeau!'

This chapeau, of the shape called a French cottage, had originally come from France, in consequence of which I had had it cleaned, turned, and trimmed to travel in, by this ingenious proceeding hoping and expecting to escape observation. I did not then know that fashions four-years old were with our volatile neighbours as little worn or remembered as those before the great revolution; and as the humbler classes do not wear bonnets at all, they are as much surprised at an unusual shape as their betters. At the present day, however, fashions change less rapidly, and the difference between the costumes of the two nations is also much less observable than it was then. I gazed with interest at the shops, many of which had no windows at all; the goods being displayed on a sort of stall, over which was a wooden or canvas awning, to the former of which shutters were attached at night. The shopkeepers seldom wrote their names above their doors, as ours are obliged to do; but painted upon the walls of the house the articles they principally dealt in, as was, I believe, formerly the custom in Scotland—of which country, indeed, I was continually reminded. The tones, some of the words, and many of the habits, were completely Scotch; and I have also, in some of the out-of-the-way villages, seen old women whose caps closely resembled 'mutches,' carrying 'stoups,' and screaming to one another as like my own dear countrywomen as possible. The appearance even of the interiors of many country cottages was quite what I had often seen at home, and *soupe à la grasse* and 'kail' are surely cousins-german—both equally bad. I have been a long time travelling down the *grande rue* with two tall porters at my heels, so I must not keep my readers long at the door. It was promptly opened by a *valognaise* in the high peacock-

tailed cap, which is so becoming individually, as well as collectively (not the case with all Norman caps). She wore also the long dangling gold earrings, and heart and cross, called now-a-days a 'Jeannette;' and instead of the gay-coloured handkerchiefs which I had observed in the streets adorning the necks of the women, a lace tucker of frill reached to her collar-bone.

'Montez,' said she unceremoniously; 'madame y est.'

'Pay the porters,' answered I, putting my purse into her hand, and commencing my voyage of discovery. The first door I opened led into a long lofty room with yellow damask chairs ranged close to the wall on one side, and the same number of crimson ones upon the opposite. It contained, moreover, a *canapé*; two handsome mirrors; a chandelier, which hung from the centre of the ceiling; and on a sort of sideboard, as also upon the chimney-piece, were bunches of artificial flowers in China vases, covered with glass shades, and a pendule representing Cupid sharpening his arrows. The light-brown painted and waxed floor shone like a looking-glass, adding to the cold, uncomfortable appearance of the whole; but as this was evidently *not* the apartment where madame was, I opened the next. The floor here was of brick, like the stairs and passages. A common deal table stood in the middle, and under it circular straw-mats for the feet. White cotton window-curtains, with red cotton borders, an *armoire*, a *secrétaire*, a buffet, more flowers under glass shades, another mirror, and another pendule. What could this be? Not a gentleman's dining-room certainly, yet scarcely a servants' hall. My third attempt was the right one. There sat Caroline—I remembered her perfectly, as she did me, although I had arrived two days before I was expected; for in an instant we were in each other's arms; and after we had cried heartily, and begun a great many unfinished sentences, sometimes in French, sometimes in English, our national language coming naturally uppermost, we drew our chairs close to the fire, and commenced some more coherent inquiries.

In a short time Mariette called her mistress out of the room, and I had then leisure to glance around at its furniture. The fireplace was lined with white Dutch tiles; an enormous *bûche* reclined against a high bank of ashes; and one or two bits of wood, like stakes cut in three, rested on dog-irons, giving more heat than one would have imagined, but constantly requiring replenishing, and consequently as troublesome as dull, for I soon found it not good economy to be perpetually keeping up a blaze, and wood is not now to be had for a trifle. Two very high, very broad, very uncommon-looking sofas next attracted my attention, having never before seen anything that resembled them. A drapery of yellow silk, appended to a huge gilt ring fixed to the ceiling, hung over both; two round, hard, bolster-shaped cushions of the same material were at each end, over what appeared to me something very much like a yellow silk counterpane, trimmed, like the curtains, with handsome brown and yellow fringe, and hanging nearly down to the floor, only just showing a carved mahogany board, that all but touched it. At the further end of the room was a large gilt angel, holding a circular looking-glass, to which the expanded wings formed a sort of outward drapery, if I may so express myself, whilst folds of the richest lace were festooned immediately below; a *secrétaire* and *commode en marqueterie* with yellow marble tops, and two elegantly-formed tables, supporting alabaster and China ornaments, were against the walls; while the everlasting pendules and

flower-globes ornamented the chimney, and completed the furniture of the room, the floor of which was waxed, and presented nothing nearer a carpet than a wolf-skin-rug. An ivory workbox stood upon the *commode*, a knitting-table by Caroline's chair, and I was busily examining the progress she had made in a shawl when she returned. I expressed my admiration at the several things I had been looking at, particularly these 'curious sofas.'

'Sofas, ma chère amie! They are beds. You will occupy one of them to-night, for I am not satisfied that the couch destined for you is yet sufficiently aired, and monsieur's room is undergoing repair, so he will sleep at the Cheval Tricolor. I don't allow the embroidered pillow to be placed on them, being too much of a Parisienne to admire anything so provincial; but now I recollect that in England the beds are all *à la quenouilles*, I don't so much wonder at your mistake.'

'We have,' answered I, 'what are called French beds in our dressing-rooms, and in all small rooms in newly-furnished houses; but they are not exactly like these. How do you manage at night?'

'Look here,' said she, lifting up one of the before-mentioned silk coverings, and displaying underneath a well-made bed all ready turned down. 'And now, come this way,' opening, as she spoke, a dark closet, where square plain pillows, common tufted quilts, wash-stand, towel, &c. were seen. 'When I have done dressing, and gone to breakfast (we breakfast at twelve, and coffee will be brought to you at eight), these things are all removed, beds made, windows opened, floors sponged or waxed, and all is ready to see company. I receive twice a week—Tuesdays and Fridays—although my day is properly Tuesday; for Madame Charenton has taken Friday, and as she almost always has dancing, no one comes to me but in the morning.'

'But, Caroline, do you always sit in your bedroom?'

'Always, except sometimes upon Tuesdays, and when we give our two annual dinners and *bal privé*. People of our fortune all do so—it is much more comfortable and economical. Mariette would grumble sadly if we used more rooms.'

'Is Mariette your own maid or the housemaid?'

'We have just two servants, *ma belle*: Louis, who is cook, footman, valet, and chambermaid; and Mariette, who dresses and sews for me, dusts my valuables, makes my bed, and opens the door.'

'How different from England!' exclaimed I.

'And from English fortunes,' answered Caroline. 'We have just 15,000 francs a year (L.600), and one house. Little Philippe, who is already ten years old, is at college (I wish it had been Philippine, but one child is enough with our income), and we are pinched enough, I assure you, to make a proper appearance. But I hope Auguste will be promoted *soupeur*, for he has the promise of at least a good *sous-préfecture*. Ah, here he comes!—how pleased he will be to know my dear Dora! Dinner will appear in five minutes.'

'But,' cried I, 'we are not dressed!'

'Dressed, *ma bichette*!—no one is coming to-night!' answered Madame de Vorinfort with a look of surprise.

From the low bows and elaborate compliments and speeches with which M. de Vorinfort greeted me, I should never have guessed him to be the affectionate, warm-hearted creature I afterwards found him; and I half wondered to see Caroline upon such familiar terms with so fine-spoken a gentleman, of whose face I could only distinguish a pair of black eyes and the end of a

high nose, so completely was the remainder of his countenance buried in a profusion of dark hair.

'Diner est servi,' announced Louis, opening the door, attired like a very respectable butler. Half an hour ago I had caught sight of him in a white suit, with a tufted nightcap on his head, busily pounding in a mortar.

'We have had no time to make any addition to our family fare, Dora, so you must pardon a very bad dinner. Your journey will have provided you, I hope, with that best of sauce—a good appetite.'

We sat down in the brick-floored apartment before described at a round table, upon which was laid, *on the cloth*, a very long loaf. A tureen stood in the middle, with the cover inverted, containing a *cabbage*. The soup was clear, light-coloured, well-tasted enough, but poor; and I declined my portion of cabbage, which looked, however, hard and round, about the size of a large apple, and of a pinkish colour: not at all like the vulgar English vegetable bearing the same name. Then came the *bouillé*, which I was told always to call *boeuf*, as the word *bouillé* was provincial, and vulgar in the extreme. A *civet de lièvre* followed, and then a beefsteak from the fillet, lightly done, touched with Lucca oil, and surrounded by bits of fried potatoes the size of hazel-nuts. Afterwards appeared whittings, with a very nice sauce; and four bits of feathery paste and a Savoy cake formed the dessert, and finished the repast. Each dish was served separately, in order to be hot; but cold plates were set down for us to eat from, which seems a strange contradiction. I may mention here that, generally in unpretending houses like the De Vorinforts, the same knife, fork, and plate served for two or three things, *bread* being used to wipe the two first upon, and to gather up every vestige of gravy or grease left upon the latter; but upon my second visit, some years later, I rarely perceived such habits practised by any respectable people. The universally-prevailing one also of pocketing sugar, legs of fowls, rolls, &c. which happened to be left after the travelling-breakfast or dinner at inns, is now quite on the decline, although not yet entirely abandoned; for I have even observed it practised at Paris, so late as 1847, by people whose exterior would not have led one to expect such a thing. Caroline drank *eau rouge*, but the sour, astringent *vin ordinaire* I thought quite weak enough to be swallowed undiluted; and in hot weather it is neither unpleasant nor unwholesome, although I consider it to be both when the glass is below 60 degrees Fahrenheit. After partaking of a small cup of coffee, very strong, without milk or cream, additions which are never given but at breakfast, we returned to Caroline's room, where we sat chatting until bed-time sent M. de Vorinfort to the hotel, and brought Mariette to prepare matters for our couches, by conveying the ornamental pieces of furniture to the dark closet, and substituting the more useful ones I had observed there in the morning.

Madame de Vorinfort, although young, and possessing a very tolerable complexion, thought it necessary to rub well into her face, neck, and arms, for the purpose of softening the skin, a pomade composed of *beurre de cacao*—white wax and almond oil—which was washed off next morning with *lait virginal* to strengthen it. For the benefit of economically-disposed female readers, I will describe how this pomade is made. Gum benzoin, storax, nutmeg, and cloves, all reduced to powder; put two ounces of this to a pint of the strongest spirits of wine; keep it exposed to a gentle heat for a fortnight, shaking it every day; then let it clear, and bottle it. A pint of good white-wine vinegar added to this turns it into *vinagre de toilette*, which is said to be still more efficacious, as it prevents or cures sunburn. This cosmetic ceremony almost every Frenchwoman goes through night and morning, especially when she nears that time of life when saucy young men begin to count our ages as they do at piquet—eight-and-twenty, nine-and-twenty—sixty; and many, as time further advances, add an issue on the left arm for the benefit of

their *teint*, which fact I record for the benefit of such of my fair countrywomen as are fond of following French fashions. No other washing did I ever see, a bath once a week being thought sufficient. I myself heard an exquisite, greatly admired in second-rate circles, say to a friend as he left the bath establishment at Cherbourg, 'Me voila dégraisé pour la semaine!' The nightcap Madame de Vorinfort slept in was exchanged for another clean one, of the same form and material; a piece of 'unnecessary and unusual extravagance,' Mariette said—'Quond on ne voit que son mari et son amie'—['When there was nobody to see but one's husband and one's friend']: no stays; the feet were thrust into slippers; and a dressing-gown was worn, until, as it was receiving-day, Caroline attired herself with simple elegance, and led the way to the dining-room, where the breakfast was served, while Mariette prepared her room. *Café au lait* and rasped rolls, but no butter, were upon the table; a bottle of wine, sweet-bread *en fri-cassée*, pears, apples, omelette, and a very nice dish made from the entrails of a pig, the name of which is illegible in my journal, were what was served up; and every day it was much the same sort of thing. I declined being presented to Caroline's friends that morning, in order to unpack my things and make my room comfortable; and as, I found, we were to go to Madame Charenton's in the evening, where there was to be dancing, I had my dress to arrange.

The carriage being announced, I hastened down stairs, and was astonished to find Caroline in the same violet silk dress she had worn in the morning, nothing in her beautifully-dressed hair, and gold bracelets and brooch her only ornaments. She looked for an instant at me, I thought, with a vexed expression of countenance, but said nothing. Judge, ye ladies, of my feelings of shame and annoyance when I found myself the only person *en toilette de bal* in the room, the only one having bare arms, low dress, white shoes, and flowers in my hair—for even the youngest girl wore long sleeves, pelerines, black shoes, and hair without ornament, although evidently arranged by an experienced coiffeur. But although I must have appeared very absurd and over-dressed, such was the politeness of all present, that no one seemed to see I was different in any way from themselves. They complimented my dancing; the materials of which my unfortunate dress was composed—it being thought not rude, but the contrary, to remark what your friends wear; and all present seemed to try how they best could show their kindness to the foreigner: no smiling, no staring, no whispering, even from the youngest. The girls, after dancing, returned to their places beside their chaperone, and every one appeared to keep the place she had at first taken or been handed to. No flirting, walking about, or sitting apart, did I perceive; no introductions took place; every person admitted was supposed to be upon an equality for the time being. Any gentleman asked any lady, although no one spoke if not previously acquainted, at least to an unmarried girl. This acquaintance, however, did not sanction a bow in the streets—in France, by the by, it is invariably the man who bows first; and indeed, unless a gentleman is very old, or infirm, or ill, it is not even thought quite proper for a demoiselle to make inquiries after him. Every two dances or so, *eau sucrée* was handed round; and this, by the way, is not the vapid, insipid stuff people find it when they merely put three or four lumps of sugar into a glass of water. You must fill your tumbler nearly half-full of sugar, with a desert-spoonful of treble-distilled *eau de fleur d'orange*; fill it up with fresh water, and let it stand quiet until nearly melted; then stir it briskly round, and drink it off, and I think you will vote it a spirited, agreeable draught. During soirées of course it is made previously, and is carried round with almond milk, and *negus* made from *vin ordinaire*, little light cakes, *marrons glacés*, or some such slight confectionary; and near the end of the evening, hot, sweet, strong punch, which the exhausted dancers



(and we really *do* dance in France) find very invigorating.

The music at Madame Charenton's was contributed by ladies on the pianoforte, and gentlemen who accompanied them on the flageolet, flute, or violin. We broke up about twelve—many having disappeared quietly before. No form, no ceremony, no trouble: everything seemed an every-day affair; for it is in their manners and address that the French—the provincial French particularly—are so ceremonious: in their *habits* they are easy—very different from our stiff English mode of labouring through our amusements, even in the best society. Madame la Comtesse de la Buntalrie was there, the Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Rochecourt, La Marquise de la Tarellerie, the Comtesse de Quincampoix, and several others really noble—an important distinction, for mere titles were in France constantly assumed on not only loose grounds, but frequently on no grounds at all. But I should never have discovered, from their behaviour to others, or that of others to them, that there was any difference of position between them and the townspeople, many of whom would not have been permitted to enter a drawing-room *chez nous*.

Almost every lady here had her *day* for receiving, and saw company morning or evening, but upon no other day. Then house, hostess, and *bonne*, were all dressed out in their best, and it was marvellous how well people contrived to look, for that one day at least, on their poor five thousand francs a year (£200). However slight the material of which their dress was composed, it was fresh, and fashionably made; however ceremonious the *abard*, the matter and the manner of the phrases were all *selon les règles*, for which there are manuals published and studied; and there was among them, in spite of this appearance of being got up for the occasion and the day, an absence of pretension to be greater than their station, which formed a pleasing contrast to the manners of little people in our own land. At few of these Tourloville soirées was there any dancing. We took our work, and sat in a circle, while *ces messieurs* played at *écarté* apart. Sometimes there might be a little music, vocal or instrumental. Every person did what he *could* when asked, and all were thanked and complimented, as well as listened to. Society was made a pleasure to those who composed it, and a few candles, cakes, and glasses of *eau sucrée* formed all the expense. No one dressed, according to our acceptance of the word, except for *bals priés*; and then the new toilettes made the often-worn, smart dresses of *les Anglaises* who were invited look very ill-fashioned. Freshness and simplicity are the chief aims of the French, richness of material and expense that of the British; and where both cannot be had united, surely the former is preferable.

At last 'rosy May cam' in wi' flowers,' and most of the higher classes visited Paris for a month or so before betaking themselves to their country-houses or farms, some of which were situated not much above a mile from Tourloville. Others, especially during the heats of July and August, repaired to a small bathing-place about seventeen miles distant. Among the latter were the De Vorinforts, who engaged the upper flat of a cottage, containing three tiny rooms, for two months. We dined at the table-d'hôte, where the cookery was exquisite; danced at the Ranelagh, where the music was good; sat knitting or netting under the lime-trees, or in some of the arbours erected on the promenade, *always* in public. This love of society foreigners carry to an extent that is inconceivable to us home-keeping islanders; but the following manner in which it was manifested at the time I am attempting to describe is now, I am happy to say, upon the decline everywhere. Being ordered by my medical adviser to bathe, I went to order a gown and cap.

'Madame has forgotten the trousers.'

'No, it was not a forget, for in England we do not wear them; but pray make me a pair.'

'French ladies,' said the conturiere with a look of stern morality, 'would be shocked at the very idea of bathing without them.'

At Penne de Piedford there were no machines; but little wooden buildings on the shingles served to undress in. The first time I went I was early, and the beach was without visitors on my arrival; but when I opened the door of my *baraque*, I saw, to my horror and dismay, two gentlemen in the costume of New Zealanders (to speak modestly), and three ladies muffled to the throat, their heads covered with square black oil-skin caps, edged with blue binding, all dipping and diving, whilst others were proceeding to join them. I stood irresolute; but Madame Charenton, taking my hand, drew me into the water, whilst M. Charenton, an enormous aldermanic figure, followed in the costume described with his young daughter in his hand, laughing, and both in the highest spirits.

'Ah, you are sadly timid!' cried Madame Charenton. 'Monsieur Agamemnon will take care of you.'

'Avec plaisir!' exclaimed M. Agamemnon. 'I will make a courageous bather of mademoiselle, and teach her to swim!'

There was nothing for it now but to dip once or twice, and affect a terror I did not feel; and this Caroline helped to make public, promising to keep my secret, and not expose me to the derision of her country-people, who could not be made to comprehend my feelings of disgust at the primitive appearance they made. To my dying day I shall never forget M. Charenton as he ran down the declivity; indeed during the whole exhibition I was speechless: but no one ever found out that my conduct did not proceed from fear or illness. A young lady, and the gentleman to whom her parents had arranged she was to be married in six weeks, formed part of the above company; and yet it would have been considered quite *inconvenant* had they been left in a room together for five minutes. She knew no more of his habits, disposition, way of thinking, or character, than she did of those of her new footman, who had been recommended as honest, sober, and civil; and until the marriage was over, he never approached her without low bows, addressing her as 'mademoiselle,' and treating her altogether with more ceremony than is practised in England to a properly-introduced new acquaintance. I was present afterwards at her marriage, which was delayed a little time, in consequence of M. le Curé not finding Monsieur May in a fit state to receive absolution, which is necessary before taking the sacrament, an indispensable part of the marriage ceremony. To every one of the acquaintances of either family printed letters are sent, announcing that Mademoiselle Mélanie Alphonsine Charenton is about to contract an alliance with M. Hercule Emile May; and also from M. and Madame May, and their nearest of kin, *all named*, informing you that their son, Monsieur H. E. May, is going to espouse Mademoiselle Mélanie A. Charenton. Similar letters are written to announce death, invite to funerals, and to anniversary masses; and sometimes the list of relatives is very long. We went to see the *trousseau* and *corbeille*; and many were the compliments and expressions of admiration they gave rise to, the intended bride and her mother sitting in state to receive visitors. The wardrobe displayed appeared to me rather extravagant for the position of the parties—a sugar-manufacturer's daughter and a timber-merchant; but such, it seems, was the custom.

'Well, Mademoiselle Mélanie,' said I, 'allow me to congratulate you; you are full of hope and happiness, very much in love, and'—

'In love!' interrupted the young lady, greatly shocked. 'No, not at all; and were I so, I hope I have been too well brought up to show it. But indeed I should have preferred Monsieur Duval; and I certainly liked Monsieur Auguste Favrier quite as well, and he is much better-looking; but neither of these gentlemen could have allowed me to live *près de maman*; whereas, by

marrying Monsieur May, I am just next door. It will be so nice, won't it, maman? particularly when we have a *poupon* to play with!

The bride was a pretty, innocent-looking creature, barely seventeen, and on her wedding-day looked truly beautiful. Her dress of white satin and muslin, richly embroidered, and trimmed with expensive lace, set off her fair skin and unchanged bloom to advantage; and her veil, falling behind, was fixed in her exquisitely-arranged hair by a coronet of orange blossom. This, when taken off in the evening, is always placed under a glass-case, and never resumed until fifty years have passed, when the old couple (in the lower grades of middle life) go to church in their wedding paraphernalia, and a family feast is held. They very much ridicule our fashion of wearing orange flowers for a month—a custom, too, of recent origin; and no English bride who goes to spend her honeymoon *abroad* should ever practise it, unless she is indifferent to being made the subject of coarse jests. Mais revenons à nos moutons. The wedding finery, boots, shawl, fur even, should it be winter, ornaments, prayer-book—everything the bride wears is white, although the other ladies of the *noce* dress in colours and morning costume, wearing bonnets, &c. Mademoiselle Charenton, with the exception of her cherry lips and cheeks, like the inside of a shell, or the outside of a new-blown rose, was as white as what she wore—too beautiful for real flesh and blood. I felt so irresistibly inclined to touch her—to make sure of its being a living woman, not a wax-doll!—that I feared I should do so *malgré moi*; and in order to resist the temptation, fell behind. She put me in mind of a swan; while little Hercule, by her side in black, looked as if he had already put on mourning for the fate that awaited him.

Their names and ages had previously been put up at the *mairie*, and papers attesting their birth, the marriage of their parents, and fifty unnecessary pieces of information besides, were to be seen there, for three weeks before the ceremony, by every boor who could read. The civil marriage, in this instance, took place five days before the religious ceremony; but in good society you are not considered as properly married until the church has blessed the rite, so that the lady usually continues under the roof of her parents till then. At the religious celebration there is a great assemblage of friends and neighbours, and much to be done: happy are the beggars who watch at the church-door, for they invariably get liberal alms; happy are the children, especially the two who support the *poêle* over the heads of the devoted victims who kneel under it, for they come in for bonbons enough to disorder their stomachs for a year; happy the brothers and sisters, and the *gens d'église*—they all get presents; but unhappy 'the husband, who has to pay all.' It requires some courage to be married in England; but in France I really wonder any one is intrepid enough to go through the business from first to last. After the Mays returned from church, there was the dinner, the ball, the supper to be endured; and then the receiving and returning the bridal visits. It was strange to see one who, as Mademoiselle Charenton only a week before, never ventured even across the street unaccompanied by her mother or her *bonne*, never spoke, was seldom spoken to, and passed as a person of no consequence—three days afterwards, as Madame May, going where she pleased, seeing whom she fancied alone, spending money, giving her opinion unreservedly, and scarcely noticing her former companions, who were indeed sedulously kept from her by their parents.

When the *poupon* did make its appearance, Caroline's husband was the godfather; and the presents to the mother, godmother, child, nurse, godfather, the curé, beadle, suisse, and the beggars even, exceed belief; he had even to provide the carriage, neither the Mays nor himself possessing one; and all the time he was supposed to consider himself a highly-favoured person in being selected to answer for the little urchin. Surely this must be altered; and indeed already several people of

distinction have made their servants present their child at the font, to save their friends from so much unnecessary expense.

## SKETCHES IN NATURAL HISTORY.

### THE FROG AND TOAD FAMILIES.

THE Batrachians, notwithstanding some unreasonable prejudices against them, form a most interesting order of the Reptile class. In them we have an animal which at one period of its life is a fish—an animal whose organs of respiration are formed solely for breathing water, whose circulation precisely resembles that of a fish, whose digestive organs are exclusively adapted for the assimilation of vegetable substances; and anon, by a gradual and almost imperceptible change, it has become a true air-breathing creature, endowed with limbs fitted for crawling or leaping on the land, and with a most voracious appetite for flesh.

In the spring-time these changes are daily going on in every ditch or shallow pool beneath our eyes; and yet in how small a degree can we explain or comprehend a metamorphosis which so intensely excites our admiration. We see, indeed, the little tadpole, urging his way through the water with a wriggling and fish-like motion; and we watch him as he slowly loses his long tail by absorption, while his limbs as gradually protrude from his sides. We know that all this while a far more wonderful alteration is taking place in his internal structure; and we see him leave what *was* his native element, and become a denizen of ours. In some instances, as in the newts, we find that the fishy tail is only absorbed in a very slight degree, and the development of the limbs is proportionally feeble; hence we know that these creatures are intended to spend a greater portion of their time in the water, and to visit the land but seldom. Here, however, our knowledge stops, and we must in all humility acknowledge the inability of the human intellect to follow the inscrutable ways of Him 'who doeth great things and unsearchable—marvellous things without number.'

The frog is the prettiest and pleasantest of his order. Notwithstanding his cold blood, he is very capable of attachment; and will, when he has once lost his fear of man, become one of his quaintest and most familiar companions, and hop and frolic in his presence with as much glee and as much awkwardness as if his human companion were merely one of his fellow-frogs. Dr W. Roots had one which domesticated itself in his kitchen. Every evening, when the servants went to supper, froggy would peep out of his hole, as if to reconnoitre, and presently he would hop out, and bask on the warm, bright hearthstone, until the hour at which the family retired to bed. What makes this circumstance still more singular, is the fact, that a mutual friendship sprang up between the frog and an old cat, who shared the fire-side with him, and appeared most solicitous to avoid disturbing her little friend.

The frog has a curious way of showing his emotions, whether of fear, pleasure, or pain; namely, by means of his chameleon-like power of changing—not, indeed, his hue, but its intensity: becoming pale with terror, or displaying his spots and markings in all their brightness and distinctness when he is well and happy. He never appears so handsome as when, in a cool and dewy autumn evening, he hops forth for his evening walk. Then he may be seen in the damp grass, occasionally darting forth his long and folded tongue, and seizing some hapless insect, which he instantaneously devours, though in an off-hand way, and as if he did it accidentally while thinking of something else. Then perhaps he will sit for some moments, apparently in a most philosophic state of thought, which is interrupted by his suddenly executing three or four frantic and ecstatic leaps, ending probably in a headlong plunge

into some neighbouring ditch, where he exhibits swimming powers which might excite the envy of a Leander.

Nor, if we seek him in the early spring, shall we be disappointed of our anticipated interest and amusement. We know that he lurks in the marshy pool; but ere it has dawned on our sight, we hear a dull, though not unpleasant, croaking sound. At first the noise seems so ubiquitous, that we scarcely know on which side to seek the croaker; presently, however, a louder, more defiant croak becomes our guide, and cautiously advancing, we descry about two hundred staring eyes, and half that number of tuneful mouths, in our immediate vicinity. But we, too, are discovered by these watchful eyes; and by a simultaneous movement the marsh seems deserted, and we are almost tempted to believe that our eyes and ears have been 'fancy led'; yet we pause until we can assure ourselves of the fact, and presently discover first one pair of the staring orbs, and then another, just peeping and dipping down again; then one tremulous and inquiring croak is heard, but still we remain immovable; this gives confidence, and the croak is answered. In a short time all the heads once more emerge, and all the throats are once more strained for croaking. And thus the chorus continues, until by moving—nay, almost by breathing aloud—we again reduce it to silence.

Professor Bell well describes this croaking as being, 'when heard in the calm of a still, mild evening, far more pleasant and soothing than many a more fashionable and dearly-bought musical entertainment'—words written in a spirit very different from that which made the feudal lords of the ancient régime of France employ their vassals in beating the waters of their castle moats, when the evening drew nigh, in order to terrify the frogs, so that they might not disturb their evening repose. This custom continued in some districts, it is said, up to the period of the first Revolution.

The frog has been much distinguished in literature; as examples of which we may adduce the celebrated Frogs of Aristophanes, and the various fables of Æsop and others, in which he sustains the part of the principal character. Then Homer himself, having sung the wars of Achilles and Agamemnon, thought it not beneath his dignity to record in verse those of the Frogs and Mice. And last, though not least, we may point to the pleasant and well-known history which tells us how 'Froggy would a-woooing go.' We should like to ask the giants of natural history, and the great physiologists of the day, if they would *gravely and honestly* say that they had ever written a more characteristic and descriptive portrait of the animal than that contained in the line—'a gaping, wide-mouthed, waddling frog?'

Nor is the frog without its superstitious associations. Among the ancient Egyptians it was a sacred animal, probably for the same reason that it is still considered by the Virginians as a kind of genius, to whom their fountains are sacred—namely, on account of its purifying the waters. One of the ingredients in the witches' caldron in 'Macbeth' was, as our readers will recollect, 'toe of frog'; while Soane, in his 'New Curiosities of Literature,' gives us a charm which consists in tearing out the tongue of a living frog, taking care that no other part adheres to it, and then throwing the poor wounded creature into water. This tongue you are then to lay on the heart of a sleeping woman, who will thus be compelled to return a true answer to whatever you ask her. We would recommend the charmer in this instance to inquire of the sleeper what she thinks of the kindness of his disposition.

The old stories—scarcely yet extinct—of showers of diminutive frogs originated, as is well known, in the myriads of young ones sometimes seen, whose metamorphosis has just been suddenly completed by the genial moisture.

A correspondent of the 'Zoologist' gives a very interesting account of some frogs which gathered round his window, crawling up the sun-blind, and peeping into

the room, each in his turn. Fancying, however, that they were merely attracted by the light, he took no notice of their movements; but on the following morning he discovered that all their anxiety was caused by the accidental imprisonment of one of their companions between the window and the blind. Many instances are given of the occurrence of the frog in trees, blocks of stone, &c. but the evidence is not so conclusive in these cases as in those relating to toads; yet it is well ascertained that, in addition to the power of respiring through the lungs, the frog—like the toad—obtains air, or aerated water, through the pores of its skin, so that atmospheric moisture will keep it alive for a considerable time, even when all access of air to the lungs is prevented.

Professor Bell, in the year 1839, described two species of the frogs as natives of Britain—namely, the common frog (*Rana temporaria*), and the larger Scottish frog (*R. Scotica*), which is recorded as occurring in Forfarshire, and in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, as well as near Loch Ransa in the Isle of Arran. This frog was for some time regarded as the edible frog (*R. esculenta*), though that animal is scarcely so large as the common frog, while it presents a striking difference of appearance from either of the above. In September 1843 Mr Bond discovered the true edible frog in the fens of Foulmire in Cambridgeshire. This announcement caused a warm discussion; which, however, we must regard as decided, when we find that in the following year Professor Bell, the highest authority, stated that he was 'enabled to designate it positively as the true *Rana esculenta*.' And the only question now remaining seems to be, whether or not these frogs were originally introduced into the country by some fricassee-loving monks of old. That they have been long known to the peasantry of Cambridgeshire, is proved by the names—descriptive of their shriller croaks—bestowed upon them, of 'Cambridge nightingales' and 'Whaddon organs.'

We do not mean to describe the *Hyla*, or tree-frogs, none of which are British; but we cannot resist a passing glance at the exquisite construction of their webbed feet, which are furnished with cushions, forming suckers, by means of which they firmly adhere to the under side of the smoothest leaf—just as the fly walks, head downwards, on our ceilings.

The common frog, notwithstanding an existing opinion to the contrary, is as much eaten in France and Germany as is the true edible frog. The taste for frogs does not appear to have been general until a late period, as the author of 'Devis sur la Vigne,' writing in the year 1350, describes his amusement at seeing them brought to table; and Palissy, thirty years after, says that in his time few were found who were 'willing to eat tortoises or frogs.' The ancients, however, ate them, and, moreover, valued them in an extraordinary manner, as specifics in a list of diseases much too long to be inserted here.

The toad is a hapless animal, which has been most ungenerously treated by man; for, not contented with deriding its ugliness, he has associated it with all vile things, and condemned it, for its want of beauty and grace, to become the emblem of evil; and he has, furthermore, endowed it with a poison so intense, that Aelian declares that it can—*basilik-like*—slay by the very power of its eyes. 'It is a serious misfortune,' says Buffon, 'to resemble detestable objects;' and carrying out the spirit of his own observation, he has loaded the poor toad with every epithet which disgust and misapprehension could dictate.

We have handled many toads, and we know that they are not poisonous; ugly we will grant them to be, but beautifully adapted to their office in creation; and, moreover, personally useful to man in keeping in check the insect legions which, even in this mild climate, would, if unmolested, speedily become a positive evil. If gardeners knew their own interest, they would by every means in their power encourage a reptile which devours their



slugs, worms, and wood-lice, and saves many a tender plant from destruction. We have seen them kept in greenhouses or frames with the greatest advantage.

This reptile is, as is well known, very easily tamed; and Pennant's history of Mr Arscott's affectionate toad must be too familiar to our readers to be here repeated. We once knew a toad which came every evening after sunset, throughout a summer, to saunter leisurely up and down our veranda, though he not unfrequently found it already occupied by the children, whose presence, however, did not appear to annoy him in the least. He was somewhat of a sentimentalist; and when the silver light of the moon fell, like an angel's path, on the sea, he seemed more intent on the picture before him than on procuring his evening's meal; however, when lights were brought into the drawing-room, the moon and the sea were alike forgotten, and he turned to gaze on the brighter and nearer light. Before rain he was unusually active and gay, and bustled about in a remarkable manner.

Mr Bell had a toad which would sit in one of his hands while it ate out of the other. Like all its congeners, this animal refuses food which is not living; and, moreover, requires the ocular demonstration of seeing it move before it seizes it. Like them, too, the common toad (*Bufo vulgaris*) sheds its skin at stated periods; but its hybernaculum is different. Instead of nestling in the mud, it retires alone to some sheltered hole or hollow tree, and there sleeps until the spring sun once more renews its activity.

We cannot quit our subject without alluding to the accounts of living toads which have been discovered in stones, trees, or coal-beds, though the possibility and probability of the case have been so amply discussed, that it must be familiar to all. Jesse mentions one which he found in a mulberry-tree, which by its annual layers of wood was fast enclosing the poor animal. And we could cite instances innumerable—and apparently well authenticated—of toads which must, if they were enclosed at all, have been enclosed for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. From these instances we cannot altogether withhold our belief; yet we must receive them with caution; for though a toad will live *for months* in a box enclosed in plaster of Paris, it will do no more: yet even in this caution we must bear in mind what has been already said of the cutaneous respiration of the frog, and which perhaps applies in even greater degree to the toad.\*

The toad was fabled to bear in its head a precious jewel; yet it was deemed so malicious, that even when dying, it would, if possible, swallow the gem, in order to prevent any one from profiting by it. This jewel afterwards degenerated into a simple stone, which, however, was still valuable on account of its medicinal properties; but even these have faded away, and the much-sought stone has turned out to be merely the fossil tooth of some species of shark or dog-fish. Yet we can forgive the superstition, and also the ugliness of the animal, for the one beautiful moral—

'Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.'

The limbs, the juice, and indeed every part of the toad, have at different periods been employed medicinally. And 'though few,' says Griffiths, 'would knowingly eat a toad,' great numbers of their hind-legs are annually sold in France to eke out the supply of those of the frog.

Our only other British species of toad is the natterjack (*B. calamita*), which, curiously enough, is placed by Buffon amongst the frogs. It varies in very many particulars from the last kind; but perhaps the most conspicuous difference may be found in the bright

yellow line along its back, and in its movement, which consists of a quick run; the eyes are also much more prominent. It is not a common species, but abounds in some districts.

#### A PLOUGHMAN'S FORTUNES.

'SOME are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them,' says Malvolio. The hero of the following sketch, by a union of energy and good fortune, fulfilled literally the two last clauses of this sentence. In the church at Bunbury, the tourist is attracted by an exceedingly beautiful monument and effigy, both of the purest white marble; remarkable also for the exquisite neatness and care with which they have been preserved.—Owing, the sexton will tell you, 'to the generosity of Dame Mary Calvely of Lea, who, in 1705, left the interest of a hundred pounds to be distributed annually among the old women of the parish, on condition that they attended divine service while they were able, swept the chancel, and *cleaned the monument*.' He who sleeps beneath this magnificent tomb was born of free, but poor parents, in the neighbouring hamlet of Calvely. I say *free*, because his birth occurred at the period when England was still a feudal country—that is, in the reign of our third Edward (the precise date is unknown)—and he might have chanced to be a serf: as it was, he was not bound by other ties than those of habit and poverty to his native place; and the spirit of adventure soon caused him to break these in order to 'seek his fortune,' like the heroes of those romances and legends which the wandering minstrels had made popular throughout the land. It would take some effort of the imagination in these days of locomotion to conceive the difficulty with which the boy Hugh effected a journey from Calvely to London. He walked, and worked, doing every now and then a day's labour for the refilling of his wallet; occasionally receiving hospitality from the female peasantry, who were touched by his youth and good looks, and amazed at the marvellous daring which was leading him to distant London; or accepting thankfully, and without shame—because the church gave it—the dole of food daily distributed at the gates of the monastic buildings he passed. At last the bells that proved of such good augury to Whittington greeted his ear. He had arrived at the great city of which such marvellous accounts had reached him in his distant birthplace.

The ploughboy's imagination had perhaps conjured up a vision of greater splendour and beauty than London in the olden time presented; still, there was much in the scene around him to awake his rustic wonder. The booths, far exceeding those of Bunbury Fair; the number of people moving about; the stately procession of monks bearing the host, that glided past, followed shortly afterwards by a knight and his attendant lances, excited to the full his boyish admiration. He wandered for three days about the capital—getting a meal daily at the gates of the monasteries—with still unsatisfied curiosity, but with hourly-decreasing hopes of making his fortune in a place where he was totally unknown, and where his rural skill could be of no avail to procure him employment. On the fourth morning he found himself in Southwark, before an inn bearing the sign of the Tabard. A band of pilgrims, bound for the shrine of Thomas à Becket, was in the act of issuing from its courtyard—we may fancy it the very same of which Chaucer has left us such an animated picture; but if so, one personage was omitted by the poet—we mean a tall, stalwart man in armour, well mounted and armed, who rides last in the procession: not a reflection of the 'courteous knight' in advance, but a grim soldier with a scarred brow, and the look of one accustomed rather to the camp than the court. This worthy is struck, as he passes him, by the powerful figure but juvenile countenance of the young spectator of their departure; he pauses, asks him in a brief, quick tone of command some few questions, and on learning from the simple lad that he had come to London to 'seek his fortune,' laughs aloud and heartily. Hugh looks not only confused, but angry; and the soldier, becoming

\* In an article in No. 369 of the Journal, old series, it is suggested that the frogs may have been enclosed in the forming rock when in a torpid state, and retained in that condition during many ages, there being no circumstance to revive them, no waste in their bodies, and consequently no need of nutrition.

suddenly grave, assures him that it is in another land men of mettle win their way to wealth and power. In short, he offers the ploughboy a place in his own bold company of 'Tard Venus or Milendrin,' a species of banditti then existing on the continent, formed of the disbanded soldiers of different nations. He was, he said, on his way to fulfil a vow at the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury, from thence he should proceed to Dover, and then to France; if Hugh liked, he might accompany him. The proposal chimed in with every wish and fancy of the wanderer, and was eagerly and gratefully accepted. Thus our hero became a Free Companion, and speedily added to the skill he already possessed in wrestling, quarterstaff, and archery—horsemanship, and the perfect use of the weapons of the age. Old Fuller speaking of him, says, 'It was as impossible for such a spirit not to be, as not to be active,' and accordingly we find that he was soon distinguished above his companions. The Free Companies of English, though living by plunder, preserved in a remarkable manner their love of their native land and their allegiance to their sovereign: they were always ready to espouse the national cause against France, and at Poitiers served under the banner of England, and did good service; amounting in number then to 40,000 veteran troops.

The extraordinary military skill and prowess exhibited by Hugh of Calvely in this battle procured him his knightly spurs, and the command of a large company of the Free Lances. We next find him at Auray under the Lord Chandos, turning, by his individual valour, the fortune of the day, in which the great Du Guesclin was taken prisoner. The captivity of the French leader led to an intimacy between him and Sir Hugh; and after Du Guesclin's liberation, his influence induced the English knight to join him in his expedition into Spain, to dethrone the tyrant Peter the Cruel, and place his brother Henry in his stead. The enterprise was successful, and the favour of the new monarch promised to assure the fortunes of the adventurer; but our hero's high sense of loyal obedience appears to have always outweighed that of his own interests, and on receiving through Lord Chandos a positive command from Edward III. to forbear hostilities against Peter of Castile, he deserted the quarrel he had espoused, and joined the Black Prince as soon as he appeared in Spain. The battle of Najasa followed, and the valour of Sir Hugh de Calvely is said to have greatly contributed to the victory obtained by the English, which replaced Peter on the throne of Castile. On the recall of the Black Prince by his father in 1367, Sir Hugh was consequently left in command of all the Free Companies. Thus far he had 'achieved greatness;' now he was 'to have greatness thrust upon him,' and in the very manner of which Malvolio dreamt.

There dwelt not far from the head-quarters of the Free Companies in Spain a royal widow, Donna Leonora of Arragon. This lady had heard much of the courtesy and valour of the English commander, and honouring the qualities then held in the highest esteem, invited Sir Hugh to her castle. He went, and probably for the first time in his adventurous life mixed in the society of ladies. It was no marvel that Leonora of Arragon, though many years his senior, engaged the fancy of Sir Hugh de Calvely, especially as her avowed partiality for himself flattered his vanity. Her exalted rank placed but a slight barrier between them, for it was the period when

—'A squire of low degree  
Marrying the king's daughter of Hungary,'

was no impossible occurrence. So Sir Hugh de Calvely took heart of grace, and wooed and won the Queen-Dowager of Arragon, obtaining thus a royal bride of mature years, and an immense fortune. From this period he ceased to lead the Free Companions, but dwelt in all honour with Donna Leonora at her Spanish castle, till her death, which took place some few years afterwards. In the last year of Edward III. he returned, a wealthy and honoured knight, to his native land, and was appointed governor of Calais. Two years afterwards, he plundered and burnt Le Bas Bretagne, and destroyed

several vessels that lay in its harbour: he also retook the Castle of St Mark, which had been lost by neglect.

In 1379 he resigned the government of Calais to the Earl of Salisbury, and was appointed by Richard II. *admiral of the fleet*! Surely the wildest fiction never invented a tissue of more wonderful changes of fortune than those which marked the real existence of Hugh of Calvely.

During this period of active service to his country he found time again to woo and win a bride. This lady was young, fair, and wealthy, the daughter and heiress of Lord Mottram of Mottram. 'By her his line was continued.' In 1382 we find him governor of Guernsey and the adjacent isles, from whence, at the end of his appointed period of lordship, our adventurer returned to dwell in the neighbourhood of his former home, towards which, doubtless, during all the vicissitudes of his wonderful life, his heart had often yearned. How years must have changed that quiet hamlet since he had left it! There was the same armourer's forge, the same village green and maypole, the same mill, and trees, and fields, and stiles, as of yore, but the old people were all gone—the middle-aged grown hoary—the children become men and women, as busy and as self-important as the generation gone by. We cannot, however, suppose that the leader of the Free Companions was a man given to sentimental regrets. He doubtless thought with gratitude of the good Providence which had actually granted him the fortune he idly sought, and with some pride of the exertions and energy which had (humanly speaking) secured it. We know he built a lordly home near his humbler one, and proved a kind lord to his dependants, and a good father to his children, to whose filial piety he owed after his death the beautiful monument in Bunbury church. He lived to extreme old age, even into the reign of Henry IV., for Rymer mentions his name in a suit at law then to be determined, but observes that he was 'weak of body;' after which history and tradition are silent respecting this favourite of fortune. The marble tomb tells us the rest.

## CHLOROFORM,

### ITS TESTS AND MODE OF PURIFICATION.

[This paper, which has been obligingly furnished by a very high authority—Professor Gregory of Edinburgh—we take leave to recommend to general attention, as it may assist in removing those objections to the use of a drug truly dear to humanity, which have arisen solely from the failure of the southern pharmacopolists to produce a pure article.—Ed.]

CHLOROFORM may be obtained either from alcohol or from pyroxylic spirit, by distilling them with chloride of lime (bleaching powder) and water. As the pyroxylic spirit of commerce is a variable mixture of several liquids, one only of which yields chloroform, there is necessarily obtained from it a variable amount of chloroform, mixed with several of the original impurities of the spirit, and with some new oils containing chlorine, which are generated in the process. With alcohol the chloroform is obtained in nearly uniform quantity, and contains no impurities except oils, analogous to, but probably not identical with, those formed from pyroxylic spirit. When derived from either source, chloroform must be purified; and although that from pyroxylic spirit is at first much more impure, yet when both are fully purified they are absolutely identical in all respects.

Chloroform is commonly purified by rectification, by washing with water, or by the action of sulphuric acid. These methods are employed by different makers, but the purification is rarely if ever complete, and has often been most imperfect. This is extremely dangerous, because the oils above-mentioned are very deleterious when inspired, causing migraine, sickness, and vomiting. These effects may be produced by chloroform containing but a small proportion of the oils—the vapour of



which comes in contact with the internal surface of the lungs—and even when the chloroform is of a quality much better than has often been used, especially in London and other parts of the country. A larger proportion of oils, such as is sometimes found, may produce very serious results; hence the absolute necessity of perfect purification, which, as we shall see, is easily effected.

It is essential that every medical man should be enabled to ascertain readily whether any given specimen of commercial chloroform be pure. The specific gravity was formerly recommended as the best test, and that of 1.480 was considered a guarantee for its purity. But this is too low a standard, our best Edinburgh makers having for some time sold it of density 1.494 to 1.497—the highest then known. We have lately ascertained, however, that pure chloroform has the density 1.500, and it is now sold of that density by the Edinburgh makers. For common use the specific gravity character is rather too troublesome, from the necessity of attending strictly to temperature (since one degree makes a marked difference), and of having delicate instruments. We therefore recommend two tests, which are easily applied, very delicate, and give, when combined, positive certainty, although even one alone will in most cases suffice:—

The chloroform should be well shaken in a closely-stoppered (not corked) dry phial, with from one-fourth to one-half of its bulk of oil of vitriol, colourless or nearly so, and of density not under 1.835, better 1.840. One-fourth is usually quite enough. If any trace of oils be present, the acid becomes immediately more or less yellow; and when allowed to stand, a darker line often appears at the junction of the liquids. When, after shaking, this no longer appears (and by this time the acid is more or less brown), the chloroform is poured off into another phial, where it is again shaken with a new but smaller portion of acid. If this, after a time, remain colourless, the oils are destroyed, and it only remains to remove from the chloroform the sulphurous acid formed by the action of the oils on the sulphuric acid. This is easily done by pouring the chloroform into a third dry phial, and there shaking it or allowing it to stand with a little peroxide of manganese, till its smell is quite free from that of sulphurous acid, which is very soon the case. It is then of specific gravity 1.500, and absolutely pure.

It will be seen that, for the sake of brevity, we have here combined with the account of the first test that of the application of it to the perfect purification of chloroform. In fact these are joined in practice, for until the chloroform no longer discolours the acid, it is not pure; and out of twelve recent specimens of commercial chloroform recently examined by us, only one stood this test.

The other test is perhaps still more delicate. If a little chloroform be allowed to evaporate from the hand, it leaves, when pure, *no smell*. But if a trace of oils be present, they, being less volatile, remain, and present their disagreeable aromatic odour. This odour is generally in proportion to the effect in colouring the acid; but the test is more delicate, inasmuch as, besides all the others, even that specimen which did not colour the acid left a barely perceptible odour, showing that even it was not *absolutely* pure, although for use it is to be regarded as pure. We have obtained chloroform which left no smell whatever on the hand; but the test is so delicate that it is difficult to procure the drug of this quality. When of a quality at all below first rate, chloroform leaves a strong and distinct smell of the noxious oils, and of course colours the acid.

These tests are so easy, that we expect every purchaser to try one or both, and we advise him to reject all chloroform which decidedly colours the acid or leaves a strong smell. This is no hardship to the maker, for we have given him as easy a mode of puri-

fication. But no consideration of this kind should be allowed to interfere.

Here we may state that rectification, after the first distillation in which the chloroform is produced, is, at least as far as our experience goes, unnecessary. The first product is simply washed by shaking with water till it no longer diminishes in volume. It is then treated with oil of vitriol as above, and no rectification is required.\*

Pure chloroform produces none of the distressing and persistent sensations that may be caused by that which is impure (even although only slightly impure); at least, in numerous trials on ourselves and others, we have never seen those symptoms which often occurred in similar trials with unpurified chloroform of different qualities. We find from the information supplied by Dr Simpson, that even pure chloroform occasionally causes vomiting, but we believe this to depend on the fact, that it is administered on a full stomach; and we understand that, as in our experiments, its use is not followed by persistent migraine and sickness, or febrile acceleration of the pulse, all of which effects we attribute, when they occur, to the oils present in the chloroform of commerce.

But the effects of decidedly impure chloroform are very disagreeable. As no absolutely pure chloroform has yet been sold, so far as we can ascertain, by any maker out of Edinburgh, while a large majority of the makers have sold a very inferior article, it is not surprising that its use should have proved less satisfactory, for example, in London than here. To give an idea of the fact, we may state that we have examined recent specimens which contained only 3-4th,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1-4th, 1-5th, and even so low as 1-20th of their volume of chloroform. They were charged with the poisonous oils, and generally also with the original impurities of pyroxylic spirit. Nay, one specimen, labelled 'Pure Chloroform,' hardly contained a trace of that liquid, and did not even possess its smell! It was so full of free hydrochloric acid as to corrode the cork. What evil effects might not be anticipated from the use of any of these kinds of chloroform! We do not publish the names of the makers, because we believe they acted ignorantly, knowing neither the danger, the presence of impurity, nor how to get rid of it. But we cannot acquit them of want of due care and inquiry as to the properties of the drug. The specific gravity varied from 1.365 to 1.475 in the better sorts of those just mentioned, while in the worse it was far lower. It is not creditable to our country that persons so destitute of chemical and pharmaceutical knowledge, as some of these makers must have been, should be permitted, without let or hindrance, to set up as makers of such potent drugs.

Fortunately for Edinburgh and for chloroform—we may add, fortunately for suffering humanity—the Edinburgh makers have always taken the best means and the greatest pains to produce good chloroform; and have always kept pace, as they do still, with the progress of our knowledge of this remedy. This is one, perhaps the chief cause, why fatal cases from the use of chloroform are here unknown.

To illustrate the bad effects of a small amount of impurity, we may mention that on one occasion Dr Simpson received a bottle of apparently good chloroform from a maker—not in Edinburgh—who, to our knowledge, did his utmost, according to his information, to purify it. As long as Dr Simpson used this chloroform all his patients suffered from persistent acceleration of pulse and other febrile symptoms, so as to keep him and his assistant for a week or more in a state of continual anxiety. At last he suspected the cause; and returning to the best Edinburgh-made chloroform, was no more annoyed by these troublesome symptoms. Now

\* Distillation or rectification with sulphuric acid is not effectual, because the chloroform distils from its surface, as it would from mercury, and is not purified, from want of contact. If well agitated with the acid, the purification is complete, without rectification, after the removal of the sulphurous acid.

we are also told, that during the whole time of using that chloroform, the handkerchiefs employed were quite offensive from the smell left upon them, which even washing did not remove! We know that that chloroform was not purified by sulphuric acid, and these facts prove the importance of what we have stated above. Yet that specimen was considerably above the average in quality.

But there is another cause why chloroform in Edinburgh has not been attended, in so many thousand cases, with fatal effects: it is the care and judgment with which it is used, and the great experience which the Edinburgh practitioners, with Dr Simpson at their head, have acquired in this matter. It would be invidious here to specify cases, but we know that elsewhere chloroform has not always been judiciously or cautiously employed. When this is attended to by an experienced practitioner, it may be used, and is used, with great freedom and boldness; but a trifling neglect, or ignorance on the part of those who assist, of the signs which indicate that enough has been given, may easily lead to very distressing results.

As medical men, however, will generally use so powerful an agent with due caution, we are inclined to believe that, had only pure chloroform been used in London, there would by this time have been no prejudice against its employment there; and that, as we have now put it in the power of all to procure it absolutely pure, chloroform will soon be as extensively used as it deserves to be.

#### WHAT I SAW ONE NIGHT IN INDIA.

THE annual inspections and reviews being over, I had obtained a month's leave of absence from my regiment, at that time occupying the lonely fort of Chanda, the capital of a district of the same name subject to the Maharrattas, and some eighty-seven miles distant from Nagpore, which was indeed the nearest station to us where the sight of a British face or the sound of a British voice could delight our eyes or ears. Chanda, situated amongst jungles, and overlooked by the remote Goand hills, continued but a short time to be garrisoned by the Honourable Company's troops; prevailing fever made it unhealthy, and frequent visitations from cholera of a singularly fatal character led to its evacuation. But in 1820, when we were sent there to protect the surrounding country from the aggressions of migratory bands of marauders—the remnants of the broken-up Pindaree and Goand armies—prosperous was that officer deemed who, by any circumstance apart from death or dishonour, was prevented from joining his corps within the seven miles of walls that enclosed the old straggling city and fort of Chanda. The produce of the district consists principally of rice, millet, pulse, and some sugar-cane; but the agricultural classes possess also large flocks of goats and sheep; and from the milk of cow and buffalo great quantities of ghee, or clarified butter, are prepared for the market. This ghee, which, in its best condition, and when fresh, is white and firm as curd, and perfectly inodorous, is far superior to the rancid butter and lard of European kitchens, and is carefully packed into huge *dubbers*, or kegs of hardened leather, and thus conveyed for sale to the towns and villages in the neighbourhood. Scarcely knowing whither to direct my course, in the total want of any objects of interest within a convenient distance, I resolved on making a shooting excursion towards Nagpore; and if wearied of myself and my gun, I decided on remaining at that gay station for the full period of my leave. About twelve miles from Chanda there was a small village called Bassim; thither, then, I forwarded my tent and regimentals over-night, intending to ride out there the next morning with two comrades, who, like myself, were anxious to verify the reports that had reached us of the prolific nature of the adjacent jungle in the provision of game. We accordingly reached Bassim by breakfast, and found it very prettily imbedded in a

series of woodland tracts rather than jungle; nor were our sporting expectations baffled, for we found so many birds—from the pea-fowl that supplied the *fond* of our soup at a late dinner, to delicate floriken and stately bustard—that when, on the following morning, they bade me 'Good speed,' I made up my mind to remain where I was for another day or two.

The beauty of those woodland tracts, as, in the diminished glare of a July sun I wandered amongst them that afternoon, could not be surpassed in the whole range of sylvan scenery. On leaving my tent, pitched in a little grove of mangoes near the village, I told my domestics not to expect me before dusk; and having ascertained that no tigers lurked amongst the fastnesses of the *near forest*—in which, here and there, large patches of cultivated land, redeemed from the jungle, proclaimed the gradual progress of agriculture—I fearlessly plunged into a tract of *bush*, which, having neither the density of large trees nor the intricacy of close-creeping underwood, was in nowise sombre or menacing. It was, in fact, more like the long-neglected park of a gentleman's residence in some woodland county; and frequent open glades of grass, whose verdant hues were becoming renovated from the first showers after the hot months, were beautifully, if irregularly intersected by tiny brooks; rocks of small size, but of quaint shape, fantastically covered by parasite plants; and snug little dells, whence now an antelope, and next a hare, and again a scowling, cowardly hyena, darted out. I carried a fowling-piece, as in duty bound, but truly I made little use of it at any time, and on this occasion rather considered it an encumbrance, for I felt a greater inclination to scramble about in search of wild plants and their fruits and flowers, than to attack the peaceful inhabitants of the wild wood.

At length, fairly wearied, I flung myself down beneath a glorious tree of the wild fig, or *Ficus glomerata*, in the axilla of whose dependent branch grew clusters of crimson fruit. Alas! like the apples of the Dead Sea, they but feasted the eye; for though they turned not 'to ashes on the lip,' I found them pregnant with 'insect life'; they were, in fact, nests swarming with little black-winged flies, to whom *Acheta Domestica*, in his charming 'Episodes,' could have assigned a category and a name. However, contenting myself with a few ripe jujubes that grew near me, I drew out my pocket-book, and, in the act of pressing into it a little unknown flower of exquisite beauty, fell fast asleep.

My awakening was not of the most agreeable nature, for I was roused by a painful blow of something on the bone of my leg. At the instant I neither remembered where I was nor what had led to my situation there; but gaining a sitting position, beheld with a start of terror a harpy-faced creature stooping towards me, and fixing a pair of red menacing eyes upon me. Again it struck me with its beak, and then I uttered a loud cry, which had the good effect of infecting my assailant with my own fears; for it recoiled, and I saw what it was. A few paces backward had fluttered a huge bird; one of those ghastly, bald-headed vultures of Hindoostan which are found congregating wherever garbage and carrion spread out their fetid banquets on the face of the land. Peering at me, its fishy eyes imbedded in red sockets of what seemed raw flesh, its dingy-white wings extended and flapping, as if preparatory to attack, it gave a harsh scream, and, as I imagined, was about to pounce upon me. Whether such was its intention, who can say? However, I seized my Manton, which lay beside me, and levelling it at the glutinous-looking creature, shot it through the head. It was at anyrate the only bird I had shot that day, and immense was the excitement my success seemed to create around me. A flock of noisy green parrots, and chattering, dark-feathered minas from the tree above me, spoke discordant plaudits as they burst from its green recesses; while two squirrels darted frantically past me with sharp chirrupings, and from a neighbouring bush sneaked out a sly crouching creature, which I took for a civet cat.

At all events I had now leisure to observe that a change had crept over the face of the heavens; the sun was at its setting: I must have slept more than an hour. I had no watch, but the lengthened shadows and the purple and golden haze which clad the woodlands apprised me of a fact that was at least probable: I might chance to be benighted in those woods, which, if safe and pleasant for day-pastime, were not enviable for night repose. In some hurry and confusion I started up and away, and had walked a considerable distance straight forward ere I was aware that the sun, or rather its declining radiance, was still in my face, as it had been when I set out, and that consequently, if I wished to return to Bassim, I should now turn my back upon it. I did so, but got quickly puzzled; and soon remarked, from the increasing size of the timber, that I was getting more deeply into the forest. I could distinguish no path, though hitherto there had been perceivable several of those tiny, well-worn tracks that pierce through and intercross each other in most of the jungles near a town or *steading*, and which are so aptly named, in the dialect of the natives, *choor-rusta*—that is, thief-tracks. Again I turned back, striving as much as possible to keep the sun behind me; but the sudden glooming of Hindoostan fell upon me as I hurried on through brake and brier, and there was scarcely a gleam of daylight left to direct me, when all at once I saw in front of me a little tank, or lake, I knew not which, on the borders of which arose the dark walls of an edifice.

Hurrying up to it, my disappointment was at the full to find it to be the ruins of an old pagoda, evidently long neglected, and almost entirely covered in by long trailing lianas. A solitary idol crumbled in front of it—the mouldering janitor to the dismantled temple! No floral offerings of mogra or chrysanthemum evinced recent devotional visitor; no benzoin, no scented gum, announced sacerdotal presence. As I stood, plunged in reflections that were not very exhilarating, a loud growl from the jungle was heard; and at some distance from where I watched their advent, two creatures—a shebear and her cub—trotted towards the water. I was now fairly 'in for it!' Should I wait their approach, or take flight in the darkness? My ammunition was not of a description to protect me from such assailants if attacked. Meanwhile they seemed perfectly unconscious of my proximity, and drank very peaceably of the water, playing a hundred clumsy antics, which the increasing obscurity made dimly visible to me. At length, however, they retreated as they had come; and as to my left the jungle appeared more thin and low, I began to look about for a path. None could I find; and at last I really deemed that the best thing I could do would be to remain where I was until the first dense darkness of night receded before the coming stars, and the moon, which I knew must ere long make its appearance.

The front of the pagoda facing the tank was a heap of ruins; but as I carefully reconnoitred it, I found that to the rear, where it looked upon the jungle, an archway and a few pillars remained in tolerable repair. Here, then, I seated myself on a fragment of stone, and waited with what patience I could muster for Cynthia and her train. As I sat there, all the various and strange sounds of night grew and grew, until I could have guessed the season by my ear alone, even if I had been blind. There was no wind, but the whirring of myriad insect beings, aroused from day-sleep, caused a sort of under sound akin to air. Mosquitoes from the woods and the water fastened on my face, and kept my handkerchief in constant play to drive them off. Night birds—the owl, that ever and anon hooted by, and then pounced down upon some shrew, mouse, or rat; the rice bird, snapping its bill as it caught at the fetid green bugs which careered around; and presently, deep in the brush, the bark, short and sharp at first, of a jackal, speedily taken up by another, and then another, till a whole pack gave forth the fearful howl, prolonged

as it proceeds, that so often startles the silent watcher of the night in India. Hisses, too, were in my ears; and more than once I fancied that a whole legion of snakes was approaching me; and then from the tank ascended a concert—the harsh and many-toned voices of a million frogs, those enormous bull-frogs whose discordant utterance makes itself heard for more than a mile in the silence of the night. Most welcome sound of all came at last the piercing tones of a Kulera horn, and then the beat of tom-toms—for I knew they must proceed from Bassim. They were right behind me, so that, in fact, my path lay beyond the tank; but more light was absolutely necessary to search for it with any chance of success.

And light, too, I soon had in front of me; but a light so fairy-like, so fleeting, so spiritual, that I gazed on it with an admiration the same spectacle had never failed to excite. At the foot of a range of bushes I first beheld what seemed to be a spark of fire, the glitter of a gem; presently there broke out another, which rose in the air, and thereupon a whole host of gleaming mote-sized cressets leaped up and down, and whirled over the tree-tops, and twisted in mazy dance through the boughs, and gemmed every leaf with all the most dazzling tints of red, and topaz, and amethyst. Oh those beautiful fire-flies! Yet almost as suddenly as they had come they vanished; or, by some mute confederacy, did they but put out their body-lamps to reserve their lustre for some future occasion? Scarcely had they disappeared, ere a real star shot out into the heavens; a faint, but no longer dubious light, like the first errand of dawn, stole over the sky; and by and by I could see that the moon was about to show herself.

At that instant voices from the jungle struck upon my ear, so near at hand, that I was on the point of hailing the owners, when a presentiment—men use that word so vaguely!—a sense of caution came over me, and I remained silent, retiring behind the pillared archway just in time to conceal myself from the comers. They were two men, in the ordinary costume of respectable Mahratta travellers, wearing white garments and turbans, with swords stuck in their belts, and each his shield. But their hands were engaged in dragging what to me appeared to be a dead animal. Within a few yards of me, but round a corner of the pagoda, to view which I found it necessary to leave my recess, and lean across a dismantled fragment of the building, they halted; and then—for now the moon was actually up—I saw that their burthen was no animal, but a dead man. It was a large and heavy corpse, dressed in rich raiment, for I could plainly distinguish the brocaded trousers, the gold-hemmed robes, the silver-mounted creese in the burnished belt. And then one of them spoke in the common *rekhta*, or mixed dialect of Hindoostan—at which I rejoiced, for I understood neither Persian, nor Mahratta, nor Telogos, nor Tamul.

'Take off the *roomal* (handkerchief), Kahoo; it has done its duty once more: it is the seventh time, and must therefore be now discarded. Burn it we must, and place it before the idol of Kalee. This fat unwieldy hog's son must be disposed of. Now for his girdle and turban.'

I saw them untwist a long noose-like piece of linen from the corpse's neck, on which the bald head fell loosely back. He had been strangled by Thugs, and the Thugs were close to me! They divested him of his girdle, which made a clinking noise as it struck the ground.

'Do not rip it open, Kahoo; said he not that he had a hundred asrafies of gold, and four dozens of earrings and nose-rings about his person? Look to his turban; they are safer where they are.'

They undid the windings of the turban, from which I saw them take many jewels; which, with the girdle, they stowed away amongst their garments. I raised my Manton: a strange desire came over me to kill those wretches; but I remembered that what might kill a vulture, might but scratch a man. Had I slain those



murderers of the murdered, would it still have been murder? Be sure that it is God's to punish! And when, many years thereafter, I saw at Gantvor, in the Northern Division, no fewer than 160 convicted Thugs working in chains, I thought that it was very possible those two men were amongst them.

Presently one of the men withdrew into some nook of the ruins, the other dragged the body nearer to the tank, and I heard him tell his comrade to fetch the *hadali*, or pickaxe. I could now no longer see them, but I heard the stroke of the pickaxe, and knew that they were digging a grave; and by and by I also knew, by the sound of tramping, that they were pressing the earth compactly over their victim. A crackling noise succeeded, and from the bright reflection that shone all around, I guessed that they had lit a fire over the grave—their common practice.

A complete silence, that lasted for more than an hour, convinced me that they had either departed, or had fallen asleep; and I was on the point of stealing from my hidingplace, when loud voices in the distance beyond the tank reached me. I heard the shouting of men; and amongst the advancing voices there was one that was familiar and most welcome to me.

'Sahib azeez! Sahib, kehan hue toom?'—'Master, dear master! where art thou?' Yes, sure enough it was the voice of my faithful Sooliman! And then gliding cautiously from my retreat, I looked for the Thugs. They were not visible; but a large fire lay smouldering near the lake, and some burnt rags were strewed before the hideous idol. Were the Thugs sleeping in the temple? I knew not, neither did I care; for now flashing across the water I perceived the glare of many torches, and with a loud voice I hailed my servant. In a few moments thereafter he was at my side, kissing my hands, and thanking Allah and the Prophet that I was found.

It may be as well to say that although information was given to the head man of Bassim, as well as to the proper authorities in high places, as to what I had witnessed, no discovery of the murderers was made; nor were any traces of them found in the ruined temple. There was a buried body, and that was all.

### Tales for Young People.

#### HILDA'S SECRET.

HILDA was very busy indeed. She sat on her stool at the window with her French book in her hand, and a dictionary on her lap, studying hard. She allowed nothing to distract her attention. The kitten could not understand what was the matter. It put up its little paw and patted her, and mewed, and then scampered off, and came back again, rubbing its dark face against her knee; but it was of no use, and Puss had to roll herself up, and sing her sleepy song at her young mistress' feet. At last Hilda jumped up, and clapping her hands, ran to a lady who was sitting at the other end of the room writing. 'I can say it now, mamma,' she cried. 'I have found out every word, and can't think how it was so difficult yesterday.'

The lady, whose name was Mrs Mowbray, smiled and took the book, whilst Hilda first repeated a short French fable, and then translated it into English. 'You are a dear good child,' said her mamma when she had finished. 'You do not know how much I love you when I see you so industrious and anxious to please me: I, too, am anxious to please my little, dutiful child. I will take you with me in the carriage to-day wherever you choose. Tell me where shall it be?'

Hilda thought for a little, and then said, 'Well, mamma, if a fairy were to come and say, "Hilda, you are a good girl, and I will give you what you most wish for," I should answer, "Thank you, Mrs Fairy; take me, if you please, to the Pantheon Bazaar, and give me whatever I choose to ask."'

'Whatever you choose to ask!' said her mamma laugh-

ing: 'why, then, Miss Hilda, I suppose you would wish every pretty thing you saw?'

'No, no, mamma,' answered Hilda gravely. 'I am not greedy or covetous; I only meant one thing—any one thing, you know.'

'Oh, that is very different: I think I may manage to afford that. Ring the bell, dear, and then make haste to get dressed, as you generally take so long.'

Hilda joyfully hurried away, and with the assistance of her maid was very soon ready. The day was beautiful, the carriage was comfortable, mamma was pleased, and Hilda was happy, so that everything went on well. They first drove round the park, and as it was in the height of the season, Hilda was very much amused by seeing so many different carriages and such a number of beautiful ladies. Then they left the park, and driving down Oxford Street, soon reached the bazaar. Although there were many beautiful things to choose from, Hilda had no difficulty in fixing. Her mind had been made up long ago, and she had been only waiting for an opportunity of darting upon poor papa some day when he appeared capable of being melted. She led her mamma to a stall near the door which generally attracts the notice of little girls. It was covered with the most beautiful wax dolls of all sizes and descriptions. The one which Hilda's heart especially warmed to was the Princess-Royal in a glass case.

'Is it not lovely, mamma?' she whispered. 'See, it is just like a baby: it has real hair on its head, and real eyelashes and eyebrows; and just look at the dimples in its beautiful arms!'

'It's a real model, miss,' said the person who kept the stall: 'it's the most perfect thing of its kind that has ever been made.'

'What is the price?' said mamma, who began to be afraid.

'One guinea, ma'am, without its clothes; twenty-six shillings if dressed.'

One guinea was a great deal of money, mamma thought; but Hilda had really been a very good child lately, and mamma had been long thinking of giving her a present, so she decided that Hilda should have it. 'I will have this doll,' she said to the stall-keeper, who had been watching her face as anxiously as Hilda. 'Put it up carefully, and take it to my carriage if you please.' Hilda was inexpressibly delighted, and pressed her mamma's hand gratefully. 'I am now going to call upon Lady Harewood in Cavendish Square,' Mrs Mowbray said. 'You will find a young friend there, for Selina is home from school at present.'

'Oh that will be delightful, mamma; it is so long since I have seen Selina, and she is such a clever, funny girl.' To Cavendish Square they drove. Lady Harewood and Mrs Mowbray had not seen each other for some time, so that they had a great deal to talk about. Selina accordingly drew Hilda away to her own little boudoir, and they were soon occupied in talking too.

'What book were you reading, Selina, when we came in?' asked Hilda.

'Oh it is such a delightful book,' Selina answered. 'I have finished it now, and was only reading one of the stories over again. It is called "German Mysteries," and is full of all kinds of horrors—ghost stories particularly.'

'Ghost stories! How I should like to read it!' cried Hilda.

'I will lend it to you, dear, if you like.'

'But I am not sure, Selina, if mamma would like me to read it: she never would let my maid tell me any ghost stories, although I have always wished to hear them more than I can tell you.'

'But you need not tell your mamma, you know, Hilda. If you don't show it, nobody will ever suspect.'

'But, Selina, I never have any secrets from mamma,' said Hilda hesitatingly.

'Is it possible you are such a baby?' cried Selina laughing. 'Why, you are nearly eleven years old; but any one would think you were about three and a-half. Oh, my dear girl, you have no idea of the secrets I have had in my life. At school the scrapes I got into when things were found out—Oh, you never knew anything like them! In my room, where the best girls slept, we used to have soppes every night—fires, too, in the winter, and everything comfortable. We often had books, too, from the library, and—'

'But were you never found out, Selina?'

'Oh yes—once; but we promised never to do so again; and no more we did, till Helen Ames persuaded us to

begin again. But one night, as ill-luck would have it, Helen let a dish fall, and it made such a noise, that Miss Swift came flying up stairs to see what was the matter. Helen was very impertinent, and said she didn't care a bit, and so she was expelled. Oh she was a girl indeed! Since she left us, we have had no fun at all.

Of course Hilda was very anxious to hear more about school-life; and Selina, who was delighted to have so interested an auditor, told her everything she could think of, mixing plenty of fancy with fact. At last Mrs Mowbray rose to go away, and Selina stuffed the book hastily into Hilda's pocket. 'We shall be sure to call next week,' she said, 'and then I can get it, you know. In the meantime, be sure you don't let your mamma see it, as she would tell my mamma, and then there would be such a business!' Hilda was rather frightened, but she gave the required promise, and I am sorry to say she rather liked the business on the whole. The fact was, she had long been desiring to have a secret to keep, and one of her own if possible. She had two cousins, a good deal older than herself, who generally spent a few weeks every Christmas with her. Now when Amy and Agnes came, they were continually talking together confidentially; and if their little cousin happened to be in the room, they retired to another part of it, and whispered. Of course Hilda did not like this exclusiveness; but when she used to ask them what they were speaking about, they used always to answer, 'We are talking secrets, Hilda. We can't tell little girls like you what we are saying. You could not keep a secret, you know.' Therefore Hilda had always longed to have a secret of her own. She felt it would make her a person of importance.

When Hilda reached home, she immediately flew to her own little room, and taking the book from her pocket, began eagerly to read it. It was a very improper one, indeed, for her or any other young person, being full of stories which would have terrified a much wiser person than Hilda. Hilda had never in her whole life had an idea of such fearful things. She was quite paralysed with horror, and was now of course more afraid than ever of her mamma seeing the book, knowing how very much she would disapprove of it. Then a new fear occurred to her—where should she conceal it? She had neither lock nor key to any of her boxes or drawers, and she knew that her mamma frequently came to see if all her things were tidily put away. The only thing to do was always to keep it about her person; but as it was not a very small book, that would be, to say the least of it, inconvenient. Hilda began to find out that to have a secret was not so agreeable after all. For the first time in her life she was afraid to sleep alone. The moon, which was shining full upon her bed, was for the first time unpleasant. It cast such fearful shadows upon everything, that Hilda became afraid to move. When she at last fell asleep, her dreams were disturbed, and one time she awoke with a scream, which brought Mrs Mowbray in to see what was the matter. Instead of being soothed, as usual, by a caress from her dear mamma, Hilda was in an agony in case she should, by accident, discover the book, which she had placed under the pillow. She was even thankful when her mamma kissed her and left the room.

In the morning it was all she could do to keep the book hidden from the prying eyes of her maid. She seized an opportunity, when her back was turned, of pulling it from its concealment, and pushing it into her pocket. When she went down stairs, she was afraid to take her usual place at the breakfast-table, close to papa's side, for she thought, 'What if he should feel it in my pocket, and should ask me what it was?—I could not tell him.' However, she artfully contrived to get upon his other side, and then she felt safe. During her hours of study she tried all she could to attend to her lessons; but it was impossible. Strange figures seemed continually flitting before her, and she became afraid of having the book about her, feeling as if a whole world of spirits were confined in her pocket. Mrs Mowbray was not pleased with her. She did not know a word of her French verb, although she had frequently repeated it before without a mistake. Geography was still worse; and she quite forgot whether Queen Elizabeth was the mother or daughter of Henry VIII.

'I see you are thinking of the doll, Hilda, and not of what I am saying to you,' said Mrs Mowbray; 'therefore I will put it away, and you must not see it until you pay more attention to your lessons, and are perfect mistress of them.' Hilda was very sorry to see her mamma so dis-

pleased, and she had almost a mind to confess the whole; but then she felt that would implicate Selina, and get her into a scrape, and, besides, she had promised not to tell.

Hilda was to go out to a party of young people that evening, and she was in the greatest perplexity as to where she should hide the now detested book. Take it with her she could not, for of course her thin white muslin dress had no pocket. To leave it was dangerous; but that she must do. Accordingly, when the time came, she wrapped it carefully up in a handkerchief, and laid it at the very back of her linen drawer.

The party was a very gay one indeed. It was the birthday of the little son of the house, and everything was in grand array. The garden, which was very large, and exquisitely laid out, was decorated with coloured lamps, hung on the trees and shrubs; and as it was in the middle of June, and a very lovely evening, the children were able to enjoy themselves as much out of doors as in. There were fireworks too, for which the little son had especially pleaded; and, in short, everything was charming, and every child but one was perfectly happy. This one I need not say was Hilda. Although she had looked forward to this party for a month at least, she could not enjoy herself at all. Every now and then she said to herself, 'Suppose mamma should have gone to see if my drawers were tidy, and discovered the book: what should I do?' This made Hilda very unhappy. She was continually wishing to be at home, to see if all was right. The lady of the house was quite distressed to see her so dull, and came up to her, saying kindly, 'My dear Hilda, are you quite well to-night? Won't you join this quadrille?' Alfred is very anxious to dance it with you.' Alfred in the meantime standing a little behind, and looking uneasily, as if he didn't know anything about it. But Hilda's heart was too heavy to allow her to feel any pleasure in dancing even with the fascinating little Alfred; and she was unspeakably thankful when the carriage was announced, and she found herself seated next her maid driving rapidly home. She was quite in terror, however, as she got near Baywater, where her papa and mamma lived, and begun to sound the maid, in order to get an inkling as to the state of affairs at home.

'Is mamma quite well, Susan?' she began. Susan looked surprised.

'Quite well, miss?' she said. 'Why, miss, she's just the same as when you left.'

'I mean does she seem happy and pleased, Susan?'

'Happy and pleased, miss? Yes, I think so. But what have you taken into your head now, Miss Hilda?'

'Oh, nothing, Susan; I only thought mamma would be dull without me.' This was not true: Hilda's secret had led her into falsehood.

A glance at her mamma's face convinced her all was right.

'Have you enjoyed yourself, my darling?' she said.

'Yes, mamma.'

Another falsehood—Poor Hilda! Again the book was the companion of her pillow, and again her sleep was disturbed. The most frightful figures seemed to be constantly moving about her, and she suffered very much. Cordially did she detest that burthensome secret now; and no one knows how ardently she longed for Selina's coming to take the book away.

Next morning Mrs Mowbray said to Hilda, 'I wish you to be very nicely dressed to-day, my dear child, as I expect your godmamma; and as she is very particular, you must be neat. I think you had better wear the pink dress she sent you lately. It will please her to see you have kept it well.'

Hilda said, 'Yes, mamma; but wished she had fixed upon any dress rather than that. The fact was, it had no pocket; and as Hilda could not leave the book for a minute, as she knew Susan was of a prying disposition, she was quite puzzled to know where to put it. At last she bethought herself of tying it in a handkerchief, and fixing this handkerchief to her side under her frock. This she did, and then went and sat on her stool at Mrs Mowbray's feet, waiting for her godmamma's arrival. In due time godmamma came, and was very much surprised indeed that Hilda did not, as usual, run to the gate to meet her. She did not know that Hilda was obliged to move as little as possible, as whenever she walked, the book kept bumping in a most tell-tale manner against her knee.

'Well, how has my little Hilda been since I saw her?' began godmamma kindly. 'A good child, I hope, eh?'

Hilda blushed deeply, which godmamma perceived; and

thinking it was a 'sweet bashfulness,' she drew her close, and was going to take her upon her knee, when Hilda hastily drew back.

'Oh, you think you are too old now, Miss Hilda? Well, perhaps you are.' But Hilda saw, to her sorrow, that the old lady was evidently vexed. 'Perhaps you are not too old, however, to take a present from your old friend? Mamma wrote and told me how good and industrious you have been lately, and I have got a book of beautiful tales here, written expressly for good amiable children.'

Hilda blushed deeper than ever, and feeling how unworthy she was of such kindness, she could not hold out her hand to receive it. This time godmamma was really angry, and looked so: mamma was amazed; and Hilda, looking from one to another, got bewildered, and at last burst into tears.

'My dear Hilda, I am afraid you are not well?' said her mamma. 'She has not looked well for a day or two,' she continued to the old lady, who was really distressed; 'but she will not confess it.'

'Confess what, mamma?' said Hilda, drying her tears, and looking frightened.

'That you are ill, my child.'

'But I am quite well, mamma; only I couldn't help crying just now: godmamma is so kind.'

Godmamma looked convinced, but Mrs Mowbray was far from being so. She saw there was something upon Hilda's mind, but she felt it would be better to wait for her confidence rather than ask for it.

A walk in the garden was proposed; but this, which was generally Hilda's especial delight, was now no pleasure at all. She did not care in the least to show off her own little garden, of which she was in general so proud. The weight on her mind prevented her finding enjoyment in anything. She wondered where her peace of mind had fled. 'I was happy before I had that horrid secret,' she thought. 'Oh I never, never, so long as I live, will conceal anything from my dear mamma again. How miserable I am!' Godmamma at last went away, wondering what blight had come over the usually gay spirit of the little Hilda.

Next week came, but did not bring Selina. Hilda was gradually working herself into a fever: she was now quite afraid to go to bed, and lay trembling in the dark every night. She knew she durst not tell any one, for never before had she felt the least afraid in the dark; and she felt certain that her mamma would think there was something very wrong indeed if she heard Hilda had become so silly all at once. Her lessons were no longer well done, and accordingly the Princess-Royal was kept locked up. She had also a habit of forgetting what was said to her; and Susan could not understand how 'Miss Hilda was always tearing of her frocks just at the pocket.'

'Well, Hilda, what do you think?' said Mrs Mowbray when Hilda came into the breakfast-parlour pale and spiritless one morning: 'a letter from godmamma—such a kind letter, with an invitation in it. I will read the part about you, dear:—"I hope you will allow my little goddaughter to come and spend the whole of next week with me? I thought she looked pale when I was last in London, and I am sure a week of good country air will bring back the healthy colour to her cheeks. I do not mean that she should pine alone in my ancient castle with an old woman like me, as that would do her no good; so I have invited a party of young friends to meet her, and I have no doubt they will all be very happy together, if they will not quarrel. All I require of Hilda when she comes is, that she will wear a pinafore, be kind to my dogs, and not break my old china. I shall expect her on Monday."'

Hilda's eyes brightened. 'Oh, mamma, how kind—how delightful! May I go?'

'Certainly, Hilda; I see no objection: only I hope you will be more industrious than you have been lately in return for so much indulgence.'

Hilda's eyes fell again: she recollected that, till she got rid of the book, she could not give her undivided attention to her studies. She felt she would have given everything she possessed to have seen Selina at that moment.

It was arranged that on Monday morning Mrs Mowbray should take Hilda in their own carriage to Walthamstow in Essex, where godmamma lived; and Hilda had arranged in her own mind that she would ask her mamma to call upon Lady Harewood on their way, and then she could give Selina the book which had so much disturbed her peace of mind. So when Monday came, Hilda asked her mamma

if she might call upon Selina on their way, as she wished to see her very much. Mrs Mowbray consented, and with a lightened heart Hilda took her place in the carriage by mamma's side, and they drove to Cavendish Square. Hilda's heart beat as the footman opened the door. Suppose Selina should be out!—what could she do then?

'Lady Harewood is not at home, ma'am,' said the servant, returning; 'and Miss Selina went back to school last Saturday.'

'That is a pity,' said Mrs Mowbray. 'Now to Forest Castle, Walthamstow, John; but stop for a moment at Houbigant's in Regent Street. You must have some gloves you know, dear,' she continued, turning to Hilda.

'Mamma,' cried Hilda passionately, 'I don't want gloves, and I won't go to godmamma's! If you knew how naughty I have been, you would not take there I know. I wish to go home.'

'Hilda, what do you mean?—what is the matter with you?'

'Here, mamma; this is what I mean,' and Hilda took the book from under her *voile*, and put it into Mrs Mowbray's hands. 'Selina lent me this book, and told me not to show it to you. I promised. I read the book, mamma, although I knew well you would not have allowed me if you had known of it, and now I was going to return it without telling you at all. Say what you like, mamma, I do not care. You cannot make me more miserable than I have been.'

'You do not care? Hilda, you are rude,' said Mrs Mowbray coldly. 'I beg you will not forget yourself in that manner again.'

Hilda burst into tears; her passionate tone fled, and she said imploringly, 'Mamma, I am shocked at having spoken to you so rudely. Do say a kind word to me. I am so unhappy.'

'Tell me all about this, my child?' said her mamma gently. Just then the carriage stopped at Houbigant's; and after Mrs Mowbray had purchased what she wanted, she ordered the coachman to drive home again, and then sat down to listen to Hilda's story.

'Oh, mamma,' said Hilda after she had finished, 'I thought it would be so delightful to have a secret all to myself, but I do not think so now. No: I never, never will keep anything from you so long as I live. How very unhappy Amy and Agnes must be, for they are always having secrets, and how silly I was ever to wish to hear them! But, dear mamma, you have not said you forgive me?' continued Hilda tearfully.

'I do forgive you,' said Mrs Mowbray sadly; 'but I shall not be able to place any confidence in you for a very long time. What will godmamma say too? You must write whenever we reach home, and tell her exactly why it is you cannot join her happy party.'

Hilda did write to her godmamma, and a very miserable letter it was; but what made her more unhappy than anything, was the having lost her mamma's confidence. She determined to set to work to regain that, and accordingly applied herself vigorously to her studies. It was surprising how much better she could work now when her mind was relieved from 'the secret'; and she felt astonished at the progress she made. Moreover, she obeyed with cheerful alacrity her mamma's every wish, and even tried to find out what was wanted before the wish had been expressed. She listened attentively to what was said to her, and was so obedient and anxious to please, that she became a favourite with everybody. Every morning she came to her mamma and said, 'Have I your confidence now, mamma?' And one day Mrs Mowbray, instead of replying, 'I cannot tell yet,' said, 'You have, my darling Hilda!' Then Hilda was happy indeed, and kissed her mamma over and over again. 'I will never lose it again,' she said joyfully. 'I will take such care of it.'

About the beginning of the pleasant month of August godmamma had another party of young people; and this time there was nothing to prevent Hilda from going and enjoying herself as much as the other children. Little Alfred was there too, and Hilda danced and played with him on the lawn as much as he wished, to make up for the quadrille she had disappointed him in on the night of his birthday. The Princess-Royal too, who had long been released from her confinement in mamma's drawer, accompanied Hilda to Forest Castle for change of air. Hilda valued her beautiful doll more than anything she possessed. It was a painful as well as pleasing reminiscence it brought back to her mind; for she could not see



it without recollecting that on the day it had been given to her, she had burthened herself with her first and last SECRET.

J. G. C.

#### WORKING-MEN'S ADDRESSES.

At a recent soirée of the Mechanics' Institute, Annan, two working-men present, in addressing the meeting, gave the following account of an effort made by themselves and others to establish a reading-room in John Street, Carlisle, which had proved eminently successful. The particulars will be read not without interest, and may furnish a valuable example:—

'Less than two years ago,' said Mr O'Neil, 'many of the working-men earning small wages felt their inability to pay a subscription to the Mechanics' Institute, and yet were anxious to learn the stirring news of the day, and improve their minds on general subjects. Some of them clubbed together, got a newspaper, without being under the necessity of going to a public-house for one, and at length obtained a daily paper. By and by several gentlemen took notice of them, and aided their efforts. They got a room to themselves in which to read the papers, procured books, and though their reading-room had not been two years in existence, their library now numbered 500 volumes. They then commenced classes for the instruction in reading, writing, and accounts of the young, and the old too, who required it, and in this their success had been great. They had had a soirée lately, attended by the leading men of Carlisle, including the members for the city; and thus encouraged and aided, they had obtained increased means of doing good, and were progressing satisfactorily.'

Another speaker (Mr Burrow), a fellow-labourer in the same cause, added, that 'he would tell them something more about their reading-room and school. They considered they had done not so far amiss in starting the former, but it was soon seen there was something wanting in regard to primary instruction. In the immediate vicinity of the room there were two large factories, and the children, relieved sooner from their work by the operation of the Ten Hours' Bill, had more leisure than before; and when children or adults have leisure on their hands, it is generally employed for evil, unless preoccupied for good. They made a great noise running about the streets, and the supporters of the reading-room thought that if this was allowed to continue, a few bad companions might soon infect the whole children, till they were all bad alike. So one began to say to another, "Could we not start a school?" "Ay, but how is it to be done?" was the response. Well, the thing, once suggested, was talked over and deliberated upon. Their means were slender. They had only one room, and that could not be used for reading in and teaching at the same time, and a second room they must have before ever they could move a step. With some difficulty a room near the other one was obtained, and then a school was set agoing for the old as well as the young. The rules adopted were, that each member of the reading-room should have access to the school for a penny per week, each of their children being admissible for a like sum. In about a month's time it was crowded; and so much eagerness did the children display, that many of them would sometimes be found lying on the stairs long before the hour, because, as they said, they had been unable to obtain admission on the night before, and they were determined this time to be sure of getting in. It had been said by some that the working-classes and their children would not appreciate education when offered to them; but here was a refutation of the statement—children who had been all day occupied in factory labour pressing eagerly forward to obtain the blessings of education. What was to be done under these circumstances? A meeting was called to consider how additional premises could be obtained, and with no small ado they got another room, and opened it also; and thus the working-men of John Street Reading-room had established two schools, one for reading, writing, and spelling, the other for arithmetic; and both were in a high degree prosperous. There is nothing used in the school but a New Testament, a slate, and a ruler. The master dictates the lesson from the Testament, and the scholars imitate on their slates, as well as they can, the printed characters of the lesson, which, in addition to having it from the lips of the master, is placed before

them. They see, by a reference to their book, what is read; and after copying it, the teacher asks them questions regarding each separate word, and its meaning, and thus they obtain reading, writing, spelling, and signification all at once. The teacher had informed him that some of the pupils who had entered the school lately, unable to read or write, were, in the course of a month, able to write the words, and read their own writing. This class is open four nights in the week; and the other class, for arithmetic, taught by two brothers of the name of Latimer, is open the other two nights. In the latter, the higher as well as the simpler branches of accounts were taught, and many of the children who had been there a few months were in the rule of three, while there were two of them in mensuration, and one in algebra. Such was a brief statement of the origin and progress of their schools. Then as to the library: it now numbered, as had been said, 500 volumes, most of them donations. Libraries were springing up almost everywhere; and why? because the age required them. And whatever the spirit of the age asked for, that it would have. He had a few words to say to the working-men, and they were to this effect:—They would not be able to reach a higher position unless they were first prepared for it, and unless they were trying to raise themselves. When a child stumbles and falls, a person would perhaps say to it, "Come here, and I'll lift you!" and the little fellow, cheered by the words, would lift himself whilst running to get the promised aid. Now, however laughable this might be in a child, it was most lamentable in a man. He would say to the working-men, try to raise yourselves, and those in a higher sphere of life would reach forth the hand of fellowship, and you will be sure to be lifted up. Do not trust to others, but to your own efforts; and if you do so, the aid of others will be superadded to your own. Had not the working-men of the John Street Reading-room acted thus, their institution would have assuredly not existed two years. He would advise the Annan mechanics, then, to meet often. Let each contribute a penny a week, and by a fund thus raised they would be able to work wonders. In Carlisle they had two Discussion Classes, where what they had heard delivered to them was taken to pieces and criticised. They had no right to swallow anything addressed to them without first doing this. They had a right to think for themselves. They had been endowed by the great Creator with intellectual faculties, and this was a proof that He designed them to be no idle gift, but meant them to be freely exercised.' Mr Burrow concluded his excellent address with the following lines, composed, he said, by Henry Armstrong, a member of the Botchergate Reading-room:—

'Educate us, and Britain then  
Will find her treasure in her working-men;  
Vice will diminish; virtue will increase,  
And spread her glory through a land of peace.'

#### QUIN.

The witty sayings and repartees of Quin would fill volumes, and some of them are excellent. Dining one day at Bath, a nobleman said to him—'What a pity it is, Quin, my boy, that a clever fellow like you should be a player!' 'What would your lordship have me to be?—a lord?' was his reply. A young gentleman, who had lately become acquainted with him, volunteered one day a specimen of his talents for the stage; intending, as he said, to turn actor if Quin approved of his performance. He had, however, scarcely concluded the line, 'To be, or not to be—that is the question,' before Quin started up, exclaiming, 'No question at all, sir; not to be, upon my honour!' Lamenting one day that he grew old, Quin was asked by an impertinent young fellow, 'What he would give to be as young as he was?' 'I would even submit,' said Quin, 'to be almost as foolish.' Being ironically complimented by a nobleman upon his happy retreat at Bath, he replied, 'Look ye, my lord, perhaps 'tis a sincere your lordship would not accept of; but I can assure you I gave up £1400 a year for it.' An officer, not remarkable for courage, came one day to Quin to ask him how he should act after having had his nose pulled. 'Why, sir,' said he, 'soap your nose for the future, and then they'll slip their hold.' The first time he was invited to dine upon turtle, the host, a West Indian, burst into a loud laugh because he did not understand the *calipash* and other niceties of such an elegant dish. 'It may be an elegant dish,' said

Quin, 'but if it had been fit for Christians, we should have been acquainted with it as soon as the wild Indians.' To an author, whose play he had lost, he apologised, saying, 'Here is a drawerful of both comedies and tragedies; take any two you please in the room of it.'—*Dublin University Magazine*.

#### OLD YEW-TREES.

Decandolle finds as the result of his inquiries, that of all the European species of trees, the yew is that which attains the greatest age. He assigns to the yew (*Taxus baccata*) of Brabourne, in the county of Kent, thirty centuries; to the Scotch yew of Fortingal, from twenty-five to twenty-six; and to those of Crowhurst in Surrey, and Ripon in Yorkshire respectively fourteen and a-half and twelve centuries.—(*Decandolle, de la Longévité des Arbres*, p. 65). Endlicher remarks that the age of another yew-tree in the churchyard of Gresford, in North Wales, which measures fifty-two English feet in circumference below the branches, is estimated at 1400 years, and that of a yew in Derbyshire at 2096. In Lithuania, lime-trees have been cut down which were eighty-seven English feet in circumference, and in which 815 annual rings have been counted.—*Humboldt's Aspects of Nature*.

#### THE QUALITY OF GREATNESS.

The first universal attribute of truth is its greatness; this quality it is which has mainly fascinated the hearts of those who have most devotedly pursued it. It is the more worthy of our observation, since it is through this quality, amongst others, that we see the moral and intellectual worlds, which are so generally distinguished, and have been so often contrasted, mingle their nature, and pass into each other. For if greatness be an attribute of something which is sensibly or intellectually impressed, still it discloses itself as such by the mode in which our moral, as distinct from our intellectual, nature is affected by it. All greatness expands, elevates, commands, and tranquillises. We know the feelings with which we look upon the starry heavens, the silent outspread mountains, and the ocean. We are conscious how the eye fails to span them, and how the overflowing and incapable sense fixes itself to receive what it cannot contain; scanning, and again scanning, the object which at once invites and baffles, satisfies and eludes it. Such, we all know from experience, is the manifestation of greatness when approaching to the sublime, and disclosed to our bodily senses. But whether it address itself directly to our senses, or whether it be revealed at once and simply to our imagination, as in poetry, or to the imagination as ministering to the intellect which compares, combines, and generalises, as in the higher departments of knowledge, the effect is in kind and character the same. We confess its presence by the same mode of feeling, the same attitude of attention, absorption, submission, and repose. Whether our eye be fixed upon the sublimer scenery of nature, or our fancy be filled with the first and second books of the 'Paradise Lost,' or our intellect contemplate the highest and vastest subjects of human thought, we are in all these instances affected by the same quality disclosing itself in a different way through different objects.—*Vaughan's Inaugural Lectures on Modern History*.

#### COAL TRADE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

There are upwards of 3000 coal-mines in Great Britain, which employ nearly 250,000 men, women, and boys, under ground and above, termed hewers, putters, trappers, overlookers, bankmen, &c. &c. The capital invested in working-stock, tramways, staiths, and harbours, altogether exceeds £30,000,000 in value; and the 'get of coal,' as it is technically termed, amounts to 34,000,000 tons annually; the estimated value of which, at the 'pit's mouth,' is £10,000,000. Of this enormous quantity of coal, one-third is raised in the Northumberland and Durham districts, from whence the chief exports of the kingdom are made by the rivers Tyne, Wear, and Tees, both foreign and coast-ways. The chief points of home consumption are in the iron works of Staffordshire, South Wales, and the West of Scotland; which, together with the lesser works of North Wales, Shropshire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire, consume nearly one-third of the whole. The residue is consumed in smaller manufactures generally, such as those of cotton and woollen, the salt works, &c. and by the populations of large towns for domestic purposes.—*Report on Coal Traffic, by Braithwaite Poole, Esq., F.S.S.*

#### THE PEDLAR.

BY MRS NEWTON CROSLAND.

'Men of genius can more easily starve, than the world, with safety to itself, can continue to neglect and starve them.'—*Forster's Life of Goldsmith*.

A PEDLAR hawked his wares for sale,  
Through crowded streets, o'er hill and dale,  
And modestly, with gentle voice,  
Arrayed them for the people's choice;  
And said, 'A loaf is all I ask,  
And, by the winter's fire to bask,  
A roof above, and garments plain,  
Express my greediest thirst for gain.'

The People turned his wares about,  
And shook their heads in solemn doubt;  
With tinsel goods made his compete,  
Yet called his Gold a 'copper cheat.'  
Then with a smile, and yet a sigh,  
He said, 'Though you refuse to buy,  
My wares away I will not take,  
I give them—for the children's sake!'

The little children grew in time  
To life's most eager, early prime;  
And seeking here, and seeking there,  
For wealth deserving of their care,  
The youths and maidens, fair and brave,  
Have found the wares the Pedlar gave.  
And loud their voices now are heard,  
By generous indignation stirred:—

'Oh shameful sires—to thus despise  
The Poet's priceless melodies!  
To tread beneath a scornful heel  
The source of our exalted weal—  
Celestial truths which seem to rush  
O'er heart and soul, like morning's flush  
In southern climes, that quick up springs,  
And charms aside night's clouding wings!'

And then among themselves they spoke,  
And soon one grateful feeling broke;  
They cried, 'Oh, let us journey forth  
From east to west, from south to north,  
And take no rest until we find  
This uncrowned Monarch of our Mind;  
He must be old, and may be poor  
Who left these treasures at our door!

'A palace home we'll build for him,  
And gold shall all his coffers brim;  
Ambrosial food shall deck his board,  
And nectar drinks be freely poured,  
Such as like melted jewels flash;  
A thousand looms shall creak and crash  
To weave him raiments, fine and meet,  
For winter's cold or summer's heat!'

From north to south, from east to west  
They journey long, and take no rest;  
Foot-sore with stony roads they've passed,  
They come upon a grave at last!  
A humble grave, but yet they know  
The Poet's dust is laid below.  
Too late—too late the wraith they've wove  
To crown the monarch of their love!

Yet as they bend with reverent mien,  
And pluck for relics grasses green,  
A haunting voice floats through the air,  
And softly cries, 'Beware—beware!  
The Poet takes, to common eyes,  
In every age a different guise;  
Beware lest ye such Pedlar meet,  
And call his Gold a "copper cheat!"'

#### COAL-PIT MACHINERY.

In a late article, 'Visit to Sunderland,' it was stated that the cage apparatus for descending coal-pits was not usually applied in Scotland. We now learn that the apparatus has been introduced in the west of Scotland, and are also glad to find that the ingenious application of Mr Fouldrinier, for saving lives in the event of accidental breakages of the apparatus, is coming into use amongst us.

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